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Canada's New Government Launches Working Group on New Voluntary Code for Electronic Funds Transfers and Electronic Banking

The Honourable Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance, today announced that the Department of Finance has invited industry representatives, consumer groups and provincial governments to participate in a working group to develop a new voluntary code for electronic funds transfers and electronic banking.

"More and more, Canadians are relying on electronic banking to pay their bills and access their hard-earned money," said Minister Flaherty. "This new working group will look into new electronic payment methods and see how the protection of consumers can be enhanced so that all Canadians can enjoy the highest standard of service from Canada's world-class financial institutions."

The Government committed to encourage the adoption of a new code in the white paper entitled *2006 Financial Institutions Legislation Review: Proposals for an Effective and Efficient Financial Services Framework*.

It is intended that the new code build upon the successful *Canadian Code of Practice for Consumer Debit Card Services* (debit card code), which was introduced in 1992, to encompass all forms of face-to-face and online debit transactions and electronic banking.

"Markets work best when there is competition and consumers have the information they need to make informed choices. More importantly, as the debit card code shows, like other market-driven solutions, voluntary codes can effectively improve consumer protection. I look forward to an interesting dialogue on this important issue," said the Minister.

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